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# Senior Executive Intelligence Brief

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**Monday, 4 June 2001**

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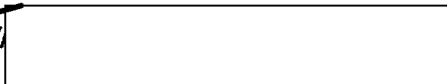
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## SOUTH ASIA

## Nepal:

## New King May Try To Expand Monarchy's Power [REDACTED]

*The monarchy's role in Nepal's fragile democracy is uncertain following the murder on Friday of the King, Queen, and at least six other members of the royal family by Crown Prince Dipendra, who died today from self-inflicted wounds.* Although democratic reforms in 1990 sharply diminished the monarchy's power, King Birendra was widely respected as a stabilizing influence amid corrupt political leaders, a growing Maoist insurgency, and widespread poverty.

- [REDACTED] press reports that a family dispute over Dipendra's marriage plans triggered the incident, but the royal family for now is calling the shootings accidental. [REDACTED]

King Birendra's brother, Prince Gyanendra, has been appointed King, according to press reporting. *Gyanendra is likely to be a more assertive monarch than his brother, who was reluctant to take a public position on political issues, and may exert greater authority over the government.*

- Gyanendra had encouraged the King to use extraconstitutional means, such as a military coup, to reassert his leadership in light of the government's failure to contain the Maoist insurgency or to ease poverty. [REDACTED]

- Before the introduction of democratic reforms, Gyanendra opposed his brother's efforts to liberalize Nepal's political system. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]